

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 01084 080937Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 SS-15 INR-10 /054 W
-----014129 081600Z /42

R 080745Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9805
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 1084

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, SN
SUBJECT: PROPOSED SINGAPORE TRANSIT CENTER FOR INDOCHINA REFUGEES

REF: STATE 56947

1. EMBASSY PLEASED TO INITIATE RENEWED APPROACH TO SINGAPORE GOVERNMENT ON REFUGEE TRANSIT CENTER AS REQUESTED REFTEL, AND WILL SEEK EARLY APPOINTMENT WITH GOS AT APPROPRIATE LEVEL. BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT CHANCES OF MOVING PROJECT AHEAD WILL BE IMPROVED IF U.S. APPROACH IS COORDINATED MORE CLOSELY WITH UNHCR. WE SUGGEST THAT UNHCR BE ASKED TO SEND A SECOND LETTER TO GOS AS HARTLEY HAS OFFERED TO DO, AND THAT WE MAKE OUR APPROACH IMMEDIATELY AFTER BEING INFORMED THAT LETTER HAS BEEN TRANSMITTED.

2. WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT UNHCR LETTER MAKE FAVORABLE REFERENCE TO LEE'S STATEMENTS IN AUSTRALIA AND THAT IT ADDRESS IN MORE DETAILED, POSITIVE MANNER QUESTION OF GUARANTEES FOR RESETTLEMENT OF REFUGEES TAKEN INTO PROPOSED TRANSIT CAMP.

3. REASON WE SUGGEST THIS PROCEDURE IS THAT IT WOULD HELP COUNTERACT IMPRESSION HERE THAT TRANSIT CAMP PROJECT IS OF REAL INTEREST
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ONLY TO USG. WHILE IT IS TECHNICALLY TRUE THAT GOS OWES UNHCR A RESPONSE TO MACE'S DECEMBER 30 LETTER, PRIME MINISTER LEE HAS IN EFFECT ANSWERED THROUGH HIS PUBLIC STATEMENTS IN AUSTRALIA AND ELSEWHERE SPELLING OUT AND REFINING HIS CONDITIONS FOR OPENING A TRANSIT CAMP. AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, THERE HAS BEEN NO UNHCR APPROACH OF ANY SORT TO GOS ON THIS PROJECT SINCE END OF 1977, NOR DO WE KNOW OF ANY ENDORSEMENT OF PROJECT BY THIRD

COUNTRIES. USG, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAS RAISED ISSUE FORCEABLY
A NUMBER OF TIMES AS HAVE SUCH INFLUENTIAL U.S. PRIVATE
GROUPS AS ICR COMMITTEE.

4. SINCE WE HAVE ALREADY USED ALMOST VERBATIM THE ARGUMENTATION
IN PARA 4 REFTTEL ONLY TO HAVE PRIME MINISTER LEE REITERATE
HIS NEED FOR SPECIFIC GUARANTEES, ANY MOVEMENT ON TRANSIT CAMP
PROJECT WILL REQUIRE SOMETHING MORE THAN HAVING U.S. REPEAT
SAME ARGUMENTS. A NEW ELEMENT IS NEEDED TO MOVE PROJECT OFF
DEAD CENTER--OR AT LEAST TO REOPEN DISCUSSION OF IT--AND THIS
MIGHT BE PROVIDED BY NEW UNHCR LETTER. WOULD ALSO BE HELPFUL
IF THIRD COUNTRY WOULD BE WILLING TO SPEAK OUT IN FAVOR OF PRO-
JECT.

5. FOREGOING IS BASED ON ASSUMPTION THAT WE ARE NOT ABLE TO
PROVIDE WHAT LEE HAS REQUESTED; I.E., A QUOTA OF REFUGEES THAT
WE WOULD AGREE TO TAKE IN ADVANCE. SITUATION WOULD, OF COURSE,
BE DIFFERENT IF WE COULD OFFER THIS QUOTA.
HOLDRIDGE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT, MONITORING FACILITIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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From: SINGAPORE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780392/aaaadaet.tel
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
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